VerifyVac: Dealing with the Unprecedented, Pandemic Ridden Era

Introduction

I have developed an app called VerifyVac, and it is a platform where people can upload their vaccination certificate to receive a certified QR code that will serve as proof for vaccination. The vaccination card is certified by an image recognition program I have written. Once scanned, the QR code will indicate the name associated with the code, whether or not that name has had the vaccine, and the number of doses they have had.

This service can be used by places like grocery stores, social gatherings, movie theatres, public transportation, stadiums, concerts, recreation centers, hotels, restaurants and even private homes to allow entry to people (If the enterer wishes to present it). It can also be used as a vaccine passport for air travel.

The question is, how is the user benefited from knowing that the person they are allowing inside is vaccinated? If a person has gotten a vaccine, it indicates that they will be far less likely to infect anyone else. So far, with respect to the Covid vaccinations, there has not been enough time to determine whether they certainly prevent transmission, but multiple studies that are in their initial phases indicate that there is an extremely high chance that the vaccines have that capability (Linked in the resource section). Businesses and congregations would be able to determine which people are "safe" to allow in, and that would immensely reduce the risk of getting Covid in their stores. This provides a factor of safety that significantly protects against employees being infected, and also provides reassurance to their customers, increasing confidence and attendance to their stores. The same applies to private homes; people will want to know whether handymen, tutors, or babysitters will not transmit the virus.

Competition

Currently, there are no apps on the market that provide this exact service, but similar ones are in the process of development for use in airlines and private hospitals only. However, I believe a very high demand exists among the public as well from the surveys I have conducted (attached in resources).

Reach

Not only is the target audience a differentiating factor, but in the future my app will also be a resource for providing government approved, up to date information on the potency and guarantees of specific vaccinations. Even though that will not be the main function of the app, it will be a crucial feature because time and again it has been shown that people do not know what sources they can trust when it comes to this kind of issue. This is where support from state funding and government officials would help in approving the vital information that the app would provide.

Many vaccine volunteer groups are cropping up throughout the US to aid (mostly seniors) in the process of signing up for vaccines, getting transported to clinics, and teaching about aftercare. If these volunteers spread the news about the app to whomever they are helping, it could be a massive way for outreach.

As for businesses and philanthropy, partnering with organizations like care.com or varsitytutors.com would allow them to provide the app to babysitters, tutors, and pet sitters to assure their clients of immunity and non transmissibility.

Accessibility

The app is very visual based, as one just has to enter in their number and name, and take a picture of both sides of the certificate. After that, they simply open up the app and navigate to either show their QR code, or scan someone's QR code (Detailed video in resource section). There may not be much demand for a senior to use it, but if they chose to do so, I will come out with an app on "jitterbug", the most commonly used phone among seniors, to give them more access.

For low income individuals who may not have access to a phone, I have also programmed a website that has the same capability as the app. If all else fails, they will just have to carry their physical copy of the certificate. If they do however gain access to internet through a library or internet cafe for the uploading process,, then they can access their QR code without internet for the rest of their account's life.

Personal connection

Ever since the pandemic started, I have been surrounded by people who have extreme positions on mask rules; school, gym, library, and business statuses; and vaccine effectiveness. I hate to see people so divided and conflicted, so I started this venture to just try and make the world a better place. The problem, to me, came down to misinformation and miscommunication. Overall, America was not prepared in any way to handle the pandemic, and this is just my effort to make sure that history does not repeat itself.

Conclusion

Overall, the app addresses two crucial things that need to change in the future in order to deal with pandemics more efficiently: the extent of caution and restrictions on people mingling in society, and the way vetted information is provided to people.

Resources

Link to a video of the app demo.

Download the app on Android devices Here.

Study from Astrazeneca, articles from Vox, Association of American Medical Colleges, and CNBC that indicate that it is highly likely that vaccines (especially Covid) prevent transmission.

Images from a survey that collected responses from over 100 people, with 80% confirming that they would want and be willing to use the app.